

Voice of the International Students

VIS

医学研究院
国際連携部門だより

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What is VIS ?

The International Relations Division of the Faculty of Medicine issues VIS to send out the live messages from International Students of Graduate School of Medicine, Graduate School of Biomedical Science and School of Medicine, and to promote the exchange of intercultural information. We hope VIS helps to cultivate intercultural communications and boost international exchanges.

VISの発行の目的は、医学院・医理工学院・医学部医学科の留学生の生の声を発信することと、異文化間の情報交換を促進することです。VISが異文化間のコミュニケーションを養い、国際交流を実行していくうえで役立つことを望みます。

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Taipei Medical University, Taiwan

During my four-week internship at Hokkaido University Hospital, I had the opportunity to rotate through Gastroenterological Surgery, Cardiovascular Surgery, and Thoracic Surgery. This experience was truly valuable, both professionally and personally. Each department provided a distinctive learning environment that deepened my understanding of clinical practice and surgical techniques.

In the Gastroenterological Surgery department, I participated in a range of cases, gaining knowledge on liver transplants and various gastrointestinal diseases. In Cardiovascular Surgery, I witnessed advanced heart surgeries, including valve replacement and aortic dissection repair. This was a crucial learning moment, especially observing the surgical precision and teamwork. Finally, in Thoracic Surgery, I had the opportunity to attend outpatient clinic and join lung cancer surgeries, using cutting-edge technologies like robotic-assisted surgery.

Despite the language barrier, I was fortunate to have mentors who patiently translated and explained concepts in English. Their dedication to teaching and their kindness made my experience memorable. This internship has strengthened my aspiration to become a skilled surgeon and taught me the

importance of empathy and collaboration in medicine. Lastly, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all the members I met in Hokkaido university, and I hope to meet my Japanese good friends again to continue learning from one another!

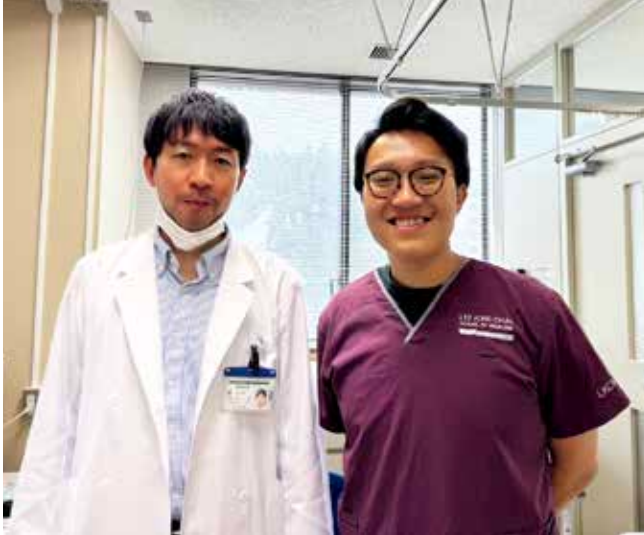


Wang Po-Chun

Department of Gastroenterological Surgery |
Department of Cardiovascular Surgery
Department of Thoracic Surgery
Period: September 9 – October 4, 2024

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Nanyang Technological University, Singapore



Mi Jiajing

Department of Respiratory Medicine
Department of Paediatrics
Department of Cardiovascular Medicine
Period: August 26 – October 4, 2024

Hokkaido University Hospital was a fantastic experience for clinical exchange. The doctors and medical students are friendly and regularly approached me to offer teachings and to show me around Sapporo city. I was fortunate enough to interact with them both within and outside the hospital as they introduced me to the Hokkaido way to life. The facilities at the university are also advanced with many different techniques and investigations not commonly seen in Singapore, providing me with an eye-opening experience. As Hokkaido University is a tertiary center and one of the largest hospitals in Hokkaido, there were also an interesting mix of cases, allowing for an interesting learning experience.

The international relations department also facilitated my application well and ensured that the departments knew that I was arriving and that my accommodation needs were met.

While I was fortunate enough to be granted a 6-week elective program, I understand that the original application only limited me to 4 weeks. I think it would be easier for future students if they were allowed to choose their electives with two-week blocks to allow for a greater level of flexibility.

I would highly recommend Hokkaido University to all interested students.

All six weeks spent at Hokkaido University were very fulfilling and provided a lot of insight of the difference between the Singapore and Japanese healthcare system, and how I can better improve my care of patients in the future. As compared to technology-reliant Singapore where we drag along computers-on-wheels whenever we go and see patients, it was refreshing to see doctors see patients without any of those equipments, and just purely connecting with the patient to see how they are doing, and thereby forming a close and trusting relationship with the patient. This is something I believe I can incorporate into my future practice in Singapore.

I was also able to see many interesting cases that I have never seen before, and which my mentors very kindly went through one by one with me, for which I am very grateful for. The mentors were also very patient and knowledgeable. This was one of the most enjoyable postings I have had and would highly recommend it to anyone looking for a posting that will broaden their perspective of the global healthcare system.

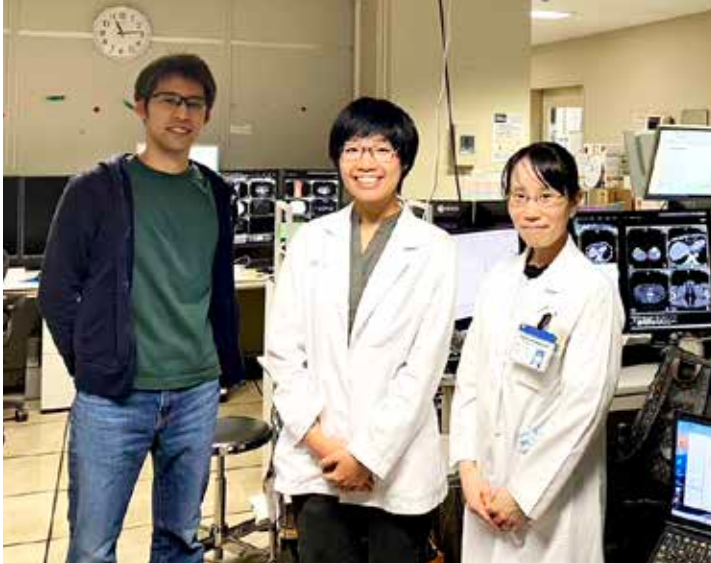


Grace Lim En Hui

Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology
Department of Paediatrics
Period: August 26 – October 4, 2024

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From China Medical University, Taiwan (R.O.C.)



Chen Yin-Shan

Department of Dermatology
Department of Diagnostic imaging
Period: September 9 – October 4, 2024

I took clerkship in Dermatology and Diagnostic Imaging. The doctors were all very nice. They were passionate for teaching and would always explain what they want to tell you in various ways until you understood. In Dermatology out-patient department, the doctor would briefly introduce the patient and his/her disease even it was busy. At ward, I observed the doctors doing wound care and dressing change. They really cared about the patient's feelings. Every time a doctor was about to touch the patient or conduct any move, he/she would tell the patient first.

The relationship between medical staff and patients seemed to be good. I also joined Clinico-Pathological Conference. A doctor would study the cases in advance, and taught me about each case being discussed, for which I was super grateful. In Diagnostic Imaging department, I learned to read CT, MRI, and PET images through practice reading real cases, after which doctors would discuss the case with me and give me feedbacks. In nuclear medicine, I visited the AI center, which was very advanced. In interventional radiology, I observed different interventions such as TAE, lymphangiography and embolization, and gold marker insertion to the liver. The clerkship in HU Hospital couldn't be more wonderful.

During my time at Hokkaido University Hospital, I had an exceptional experience that broadened my medical knowledge and practical skills. As a sixth-year medical student from Taiwan, I was privileged to be immersed in both the Diagnostic Imaging and IBD (Inflammatory Bowel Disease) departments. I gained firsthand exposure to advanced diagnostic techniques, such as MRI, CT, PET, and endoscopy, which deepened my understanding of medical imaging and gastrointestinal disorders.

One of the most memorable aspects of my internship was the patient, detailed explanations provided by the doctors. They discussed interesting cases with me, explaining the subtle findings in diagnostic images, and encouraged me to think critically. I was also fortunate to have the opportunity to personally perform endoscopic procedures, including both colonoscopy and Esophagogastroduodenoscopy (EGD), which gave me invaluable hands-on experience in the management of IBD patients.

One of the highlights was the chance to witness the dedication of Japanese physicians in both clinical practice and research. This experience has inspired me to further explore cross-national collaboration in the future. I also believe more opportunities for international students to observe outpatient consultations would enrich our understanding of patient care approaches across cultures.

Thank you to all the incredible staff and faculty at Hokkaido University for their kindness and support during this unforgettable journey.



Lin Wen-Jen

Department of Diagnostic Imaging
Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology
Period: September 9 - October 4, 2024

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Germany

I am sitting on a random sofa at Terminal 1 of Haneda Airport, watching my aircraft being prepared for boarding. I have no idea what lies ahead, especially when it comes to my traineeship and how it will unfold. Before applying for my exchange through LMU Munich to come to Japan, I had never even heard of Sapporo. And now, here I am, waiting for my flight to this unfamiliar city.

On my first day at campus, I was warmly welcomed by Prof. Murakami and Ms. Kitagawa from the international office. They were the first people I knew from Hokkaido University, even before heading to Sapporo. Their friendliness reassured me that I was in the right place in Japan. Later, I met Assistant Prof. Harada from the Department of Radiology, where I would spend the next month. Dr. Harada was my direct supervisor during the internship, and I truly appreciate how active and supportive he was.

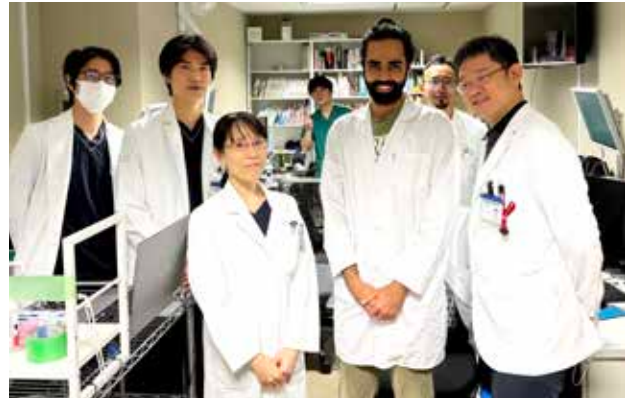
The core part of my internship was focused on interventional radiology. During this time, I had the chance to observe various procedures at the hospital, including TACE, arterial embolization, PTGBD, and port and PICC implantations.

In addition to interventional radiology, I was also allowed to rotate through diagnostic groups as well as the nuclear medicine team under the supervision of Dr. Hirata. There, I gained valuable knowledge about cancer staging and the treatment of patients suffering from various types of cancer.

My experiences in Sapporo, and in Hokkaido in general, have been so unique that I couldn't have even imagined them before starting my internship at Hokkaido University Hospital.

It's not just about my time here as a medical student. It's about the people I met, the new experiences I had, and the countless memories I was fortunate enough to make.

Thank you, HU!



Arman Safaei Nour

Department of Diagnostic Imaging
Period: September 2 – October 1, 2024

My two-month medical elective at Hokkaido University Hospital was an enriching experience that provided unique insights into both gastroenterological and thoracic surgery. The university's International Relations Division offered excellent guidance throughout my stay, making the entire experience smoother and helping me acclimate quickly to the new environment. In each department, I spent time with two Japanese medical students who were incredibly helpful in getting me familiar with the hospital and introducing me to new people. Thanks to them, settling into a new environment in a foreign country felt much easier and more welcoming.

In my first month in Gastroenterological Surgery II, I attended daily morning conferences, followed by ward rounds where the young doctors took a lot of time to explain patients' conditions and answer any questions that I had. I also joined suture and ligation classes with the Japanese medical students, which was very helpful to train my surgical skills. The doctors also took the time to get to know me beyond just the academic setting, which made my experience feel even more welcoming and meaningful.



Medina Mamtimin

Department of Gastroenterological Surgery II
Department of Thoracic Surgery
Period: September 9 – November 1, 2024

In the second month, I moved to the department of Thoracic Surgery, where a smaller team fostered a close-knit, familiar atmosphere. The department's staff, including the secretaries, were incredibly friendly, and many doctors had spent time abroad, especially in Canada, which made communication smooth as they often spoke English. I had the opportunity to scrub into surgeries, observing and learning more about innovative techniques such as robotic-assisted thoracic surgery and intraoperative indocyanine green (ICG) fluorescence imaging to detect lung tumors.

To my surprise, although there are differences in medical training between Japan and Germany, I didn't notice a major gap, as I learned that Japan's medical system is influenced by the German one. In both departments, I was so grateful that there was almost always a doctor dedicated to translating during conferences and explaining surgical procedures, as I did not expect this much effort to be put into supporting foreign students. I was pleasantly surprised by the social events and departmental gatherings, which provided opportunities to connect with doctors from both my departments and other hospitals. These interactions deepened my understanding of the Japanese medical system and culture.



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